

**CLIENT-SIDE PRICING AGENT FOR COLLECTING AND MANAGING
PRODUCT PRICE INFORMATION OVER THE INTERNET**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of collecting product data, e.g., from a plurality of web sites on the Internet. The method is operative from a client computer and utilizes a pricing agent. Using the agent, a user can generate a set of product profiles each identifying a given site URL, a list of one or more included items to be queried, a scan interval, and a site template. For a given product profile, the agent periodically retrieves data from the given site URL at the scan interval. It then parses the data retrieved according to the site template to generate a data record for each included item comprising an item name, an associated price value and, optionally, a secondary source. The retrieved data may also be compared against one or more threshold expressions to generate given actions.